

great friend, my good friend, Warren Davis. Let me just say in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that Warren Davis fought the good fight. Warren Davis finished his course, and Warren Davis kept the faith. And henceforth there is put up for him a crown of righteousness which the Lord, that righteous judge, has made available to Warren G. Davis, and so many people both near and far all across the breadth and the scope of America collectively say we thank God for sending Warren G. Davis our way.

HONORING DR. MICHAEL DEBAKEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to honor Dr. Michael DeBakey, the father of modern cardiovascular surgery, and for me a personal hero. Dr. DeBakey passed away Friday night in Houston at the age of 99. Michael DeBakey, a giant among men and a giant in medicine. His death is a tremendous loss to the fields of medicine, science, and technology. It is a great loss for humanity at-large.

Mr. Speaker, there are certain privileges that come with being a servant here in the people's House. For me, one of those privileges was meeting Dr. DeBakey. After working months to secure the Congressional Gold Medal for the great doctor, I had the chance to sit down with him here in Washington in April right after it was awarded to him. For 30 minutes, we were able to discuss his personal and professional experiences over his 60 years in medicine. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for which I am eternally grateful.

He talked about how Congress had been responsible for the advancement of medical science in this country, how Congress had led the way with funding for the National Institutes of Health. He talked about his experiences going over and treating Boris Yeltsin in the Soviet Union when he was suffering from heart disease, and Dr. DeBakey found just on the basis purely on physical examine that the individual was quite anemic as well, which rendered his outlook for cardiovascular surgery much worse. They treated the anemia, and the rest, as they say, is history.

As a fellow physician, Dr. DeBakey's work on medical advancements is legendary. His dedication to healing those around him came not only from his talents as a physician, but his ongoing commitment to the larger medical community.

His motto, as we heard others mention today, was always "strive for nothing less than excellence."

I would be remiss if I did not mention the education and the entrepreneurial spirit that made him worthy of one of the Nation's highest honors, the Congressional Gold Medal. Let me share some of his accomplishments.

While in medical school, Dr. DeBakey developed the roller pump

which later became the major component in the heart-lung machine that is used in open heart surgery routinely today. It was truly a visionary change.

His service and subsequent work in the Surgeon General's office during World War II led to the development of the Mobile Army Surgical Hospital, the so-called MASH unit. Without Dr. DeBakey, we wouldn't have those forward surgical teams that go into combat areas and provide vital care to our soldiers in that golden hour after injury.

This medical trailblazer also helped establish the specialized medical and surgical center system for treating military personnel returning home from war which we know as the Veterans Administration Medical Center.

But it was at the Methodist Hospital in Houston where Dr. DeBakey performed many of his groundbreaking surgeries, including the first removal of a carotid artery blockage. He also performed the first coronary artery bypass graft, and some of the first heart transplants in this country as well.

He served as adviser to every President of the United States for the last 50 years. Think of that, every President for the last 50 years depended on Dr. Michael DeBakey for medical advice. Additionally, he has given advice to heads of state throughout the world.

During his professional surgical career, he performed more than 60,000 cardiovascular procedures, and trained thousands of surgeons who practice around the world today. Today, his name is affixed to any number of organizations, centers of learning, and projects devoted to medical education and health education for the general public. This includes the National Library of Medicine, which is now the world's largest and most prestigious repository of medical archives. The collections there house resources that actually I look at several times a week as I prepare for committee hearings.

Dr. DeBakey's contributions to medicine, his breakthrough surgeries, and his innovative devices have completely transformed our view of the human body and our view of longevity on this planet. The United States, and indeed the world, were fortunate to have this medical pioneer for as long as we did.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great sorrow that I come to the floor tonight, but it is also with great honor that I once again share Dr. DeBakey with this august body. Time Magazine honored him as the Man of the Year several years ago. Indeed he was, a man for the ages and the Man of the Year.

U.S. TROOP DEPLOYMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, just 10 days ago we celebrated the 4th of July because on that day in 1776, we first declared our Nation's independence and sovereignty.

The American people have cherished and fought for that sovereignty for 232 years, so it is only right that we respect the sovereignty of other nations.

Last week, Iraq's Prime Minister al-Maliki said that the withdrawal of American troops out of Iraq or a timetable for withdrawal should be part of the current status-of-forces negotiations between his government and the United States. He insisted that the basis for any agreement will be respect for the full sovereignty of Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, this House should affirm Iraq's right to full sovereignty. In fact, my colleague, Representative LEE of California, and I have sent a letter to every Member of the House inviting all Members to cosign a letter to Prime Minister al-Maliki supporting his government's sovereign rights. The letter reads in part as follows: "We, the undersigned, Members of the United States House of Representatives, write to acknowledge and support the sovereign right of the government of Iraq to insist that any security agreement between the United States and Iraq include a timetable for the complete redeployment of U.S. Armed Forces and military contractors out of Iraq."

The letter goes on to say, Mr. Speaker, "As elected members of the legislative branch of the world's longest continuing democracy, we recognize that it is the national legislature that is responsible for expressing and exercising the sovereign rights and powers that the people have entrusted in their government."

"It is for the free people of Iraq, acting through their elected representatives in the Iraq parliament, to decide for themselves the terms and conditions under which they will agree to the continuing presence of the U.S. Armed Forces and military contractors in their country. And it is for the Congress of the United States to approve the terms and conditions of any security agreement that commits the United States to the defense of Iraq."

Mr. Speaker, Prime Minister al-Maliki's statement for support for withdrawal timetable could very well be the light at the end of the tunnel that the American people have long been waiting for. Ending the occupation of Iraq, which was never an imminent security threat to the United States in the first place, would allow us to refocus on Afghanistan where the real threat lies. It would end the U.S. military occupation in the Middle East that has done so much to strengthen Iran's hand in the region. And it would allow us to redirect tens of billions of dollars back home for desperately needed investments in our economy, our health care, energy independence, education, child care and so much more.

The President has often said that as Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. Prime Minister al-Maliki's statement shows that the Iraqis believe they are ready to stand up. Now the ball is in our court. It is time for the President